

REMARKS

The examiner has provisionally rejected claims 8-19 on the ground of double patenting over claims 4-5 of Application No. 10/535,482. If the examiner maintains this rejection against the new claims 20-37, applicant will take appropriate steps to remove the rejection.

Claims 8-19 have been rejected under 35 USC 102 over Franchi. Applicant has canceled claims 8-19 and added new claims 20-37.

The subject matter of this application, as set forth in the independent claim 20, is gaming equipment for table games in which playing cards are used. The equipment includes a first card recognition unit for sensing the encoded imprint value of each card as it is drawn face down from a deck of playing cards (corresponding to the playing card imprint value recognition unit 8 in the case of the embodiment described with reference to the drawings). A second card recognition unit (corresponding to the objects' presence on the table recognition unit 10), independent of the first card recognition unit, subsequently senses the encoded imprint values of the cards after the cards have been drawn from the pack of deck of cards. A comparison unit (electronic data processing system 17) compares the imprint values sensed by the first and second card recognition units respectively and provides an indication in the event that the imprint values sensed by the second card recognition unit do not match the imprint values sensed by the first card recognition unit. In this manner, the equipment helps to ensure integrity of the game by checking the accuracy with which the first card recognition unit sensed the imprint values of the cards as they were drawn face down from the deck.

Franchi discloses an open architecture casino operating system for facilitating playing off blackjack. Franchi discloses a card shoe 707 from which cards may be dealt by the dealer. The card shoe is provided with a laser scanner that reads optical codes 902 from cards 903 as they are dealt from the issue by the dealer.

The examiner asserts that Franchi discloses a monitoring system that recognizes the values of the playing cards placed face up on the table, and refers in this connection to column 10, lines 1-31 and column 16, lines 6-65. Applicant can find no reference in the passages referred to by the examiner of a monitoring system that recognizes the values of playing cards placed face up on the table, as mentioned by the examiner, and in any event the passage in column 16 apparently relates to equipment used for playing roulette rather than a card game. Applicant submits that Franchi does not disclose or suggest a second card recognition unit, as recited in claim 20, or a comparison unit, as recited in claim 20.

In view of the foregoing, applicant submits that the subject matter of claim 20 is not disclosed or suggested by Franchi. Therefore, claim 20 is patentable over Franchi and it follows that the defendant claims 21-37 also are patentable.

Respectfully submitted,

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